

Town of Burke
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Burke Community Building
November 3, 2025 - 5:00 PM Regular Selectboard Meeting

Present: Joe Allard, Jerry Booth, Mark Daigle: Selectboard

Linda Hackett-Corey: Town Clerk

Cathi Feeley : Town Treasurer

Gail Weed: Assistant Clerk and Treasurer

Mike Harris: Zoning Administrator

James Sullivan: Town Administrator

Dave Kaufman: Road Commissioner

Valerie Desmarais: Minutes Clerk

Guests: Geoff Boone, Cathlin Lord Driscoll, Kyle Dwyer, Karen Kotech (via Zoom), Karen Wilson.

Mark called the meeting to order at 5:00 and stated that the meeting is being recorded and available via Zoom.

Mark announced an amendment to the agenda: Karen Wilson came before the board to seek approval from the Selectboard for the annual "Ride for Mo"; all the support and logistical systems will remain the same, this will be the 4th ride. There will be even more volunteers to assist; the 2024 Giving Report is available on the "Ride for Mo website", proceeds go to various non-profits. Jerry wondered how many riders participated, there are 300 slots, but the bad weather kept some riders' home. The entry fee is non-refundable; Ms. Wilson also noted that partnering with the new ownership of Burke Mtn. is on her agenda. Jim had prepared paperwork regarding insurance and will connect with Ms. Wilson to review and sign. Jerry motioned to support the ride, Mark seconded, all in favor, so moved.

Mark asked for a motion to approve 10/6 /25 Selectboard meeting minutes. Jerry motioned, Mark seconded, so moved.

NVDA staff came before the board to present and discuss Tier 1-B, one of 2 paths to get exemptions from Act 250. The town currently meets all the Tier 1-B requirements, the town would need to "opt in" by 02/26. Tier 1-B allows mixed use development in a specified area; zoning administration would continue as it is. Tier 1-B makes provisions for development (50 units or less) on 10 acres or less. NVDA has an approval committee, once their committee reviews and approves the town plan the process advances. The areas of focus are "village centers" and "village areas". These are centers or neighborhoods, and since they are the most densely populated, are eligible for potential development. The higher elevations, steep side hills, habitat areas, and wetlands, etc. are not eligible for this type of exemption. The only action necessary for the town to opt in to adopt the resolution before 02/26.

Cathi asked if the lack of wastewater capability is a drawback; it is not necessarily a drawback via this location-based framework, but maybe problematic for a particular developer. The town can define which areas are to be considered. Cathi asked about a current commercial property for sale in E. Burke that is less than 10 acres, can this be developed under the Tier 1-B exemption? It is possible. Mike Harris noted that Act 250 is a big resource for the Developmental Review Board. Act 250 protocol comes into play and experts weigh in on a proposed project. Mike notes that by the time a project reaches the DRB, Act 250 has already vetted the project. Also, if there are issues, they have been addressed at the state level. In re: permitting, the DRB relies on the fact finding that Act 250 brings to the process. Mike noted that actual permit specialists would be the most helpful instruments of assistance, vs. special exemptions that have the chance to add a layer of confusion to the towns' process. The current computer interface for Act 250 information and permits is recognized as being less than ideal. Ms. Driscoll noted that Mike's feedback is helpful. The town can "opt out" at any point if it feels like it's not working.

Dave Kaufman introduced Karen Kotech of NEK Broadband. There is a 1600 ft. gap between poles on Darling Hill and NEK Broadband is requesting permission to trench and bury the cable and conduit as part of the high speed internet buildout in Burke. Dave noted that at Brian Kelly's the pipe for the leach field crosses the road. Ms. Kotech noted that Dig Safe is involved. Jerry asked about notifying the landowners, Ms. Kotech said that they can and will if that is a requirement. Mark asked how deep the trench is, it is set to be 3 feet deep. Dave noted that "the deeper the better"; there needs to be a ditch for drainage, some towns are requesting 4'. Jerry suggested that if the landowners / abutters are notified, the board agrees. Getting this done before the ground freezes would be preferred. Ms. Kotech offered for Dave to connect with the construction manager for a "ride with" to see how they manage these kinds of tasks. Jerry motioned to approve the NEK Broadband ditch work. Joe seconded, all in favor, so moved.

Dave noted that all paving projects are completed, and all came out very well. Crack sealing has been completed, many thanks to Jim Sullivan for his help. The trucks are ready for winter. Val Desmarais brought a failing culvert to Dave's attention; the road crew is scheduled to flush it and possibly put in a replacement for next spring. Burke Hill Road is rapidly deteriorating. The Church St. bridge is falling apart; it is a safety issue and needs to be addressed. Winterset is in place to repair this; there will be a new proposal by 11/4/25. Dave will be on vacation next week, contact Jim or Will with any issues. New hire Landon Bilodeau is in CDL school and doing well; he is scheduled to take his test by 11/12/25.

Jim Sullivan gave the Town Administrators report: Jim gave high praises to the road crew and the office staff at their diligence in handling the invoices etc. for all the work that is being done in town. Jerry asked about the work that Mike Bickford did on Marshall Newland Road; there needs to be discussions about guardrails and other safety measures there. The paving has been completed on Burke Hollow Road. Bridge #26 on Brook Road has been decked and scheduled for guardrails this week. The East Burke Bridge has been completed; Winterset did the work, and the project came in at the proposed amount. Jim will be working with VLCT and the NVDA to seek funding options to take the place of FEMA funds, which were denied by the federal government.

Mike Harris gave the Zoning Administrators report, per usual, permitting requests are steady. Re: the Bailey property: this is still in probate court. Notifications to the next of kin have been problematic. West Burke Park final improvements of a swing set and a bathroom surround will be completed next spring, East Burke Park damaged slide has been replaced. Willy Woods Forest: the Newell parcel closing is 11/14/25. Town Garage update: Morton to deliver 11/10 -12. They have an 8–10-week window to completion, weather depending. Gosseling is hoping to drill well by the end of this month. Mike asked about a special SB meeting to review the carpentry bids. Mike reiterated that if the board has any questions, call him anytime. Mike is hoping to get the road crew on site to review the systems in the new buildings in the very near future. The updated Flood Map is available online. Town Attorney Clark Atwell is reviewing the wastewater ordinance. Cathi questioned what the protocol is if a bill doesn't get paid by a wastewater connected household. Ultimately the home would be shut off. The format is similar to what happens when taxes are not paid; Cathi wondered about typical delinquency rates; Mike does not have this data. The perpetual fees are for the continued maintenance of the system. The money raised builds up and is designed to provide a surplus to keep the system maintained and running properly.

Mark asked Jim how the speed sign survey is progressing; new signs are ordered, and it will be up to Dave when he can schedule replacement signs.

Sherriff's contract: Mark made a motion to approve, Joe seconded, so moved. The cost is \$18,500, which is the same as last year.

"The Ground Guys" are the new owners of "The Eliminator"; they presented a contract for the East Burke sidewalk plow season for 25-26. They proposed \$425 per storm, Jerry sought clarification of just plowing, or salt and sanding? The proposal states "at their own discretion" regarding anything beyond the plowing. Cathi noted that they have always done a good job; Linda suggested that they could present to the board next meeting if there are more questions. This is tabled until next meeting, Linda will ask them to come to the December meeting

Joe asked about the local emergency management plan; He is working with Cathi. This will be adopted at next month's meeting in December.

Cathi noted that 8.4 Million in town property tax was billed, and about $\frac{2}{3}$ of town taxes have been paid. There is a typical delinquent rate of about 4.5 percent.

Jerry motioned to adjourn the meeting, Joe seconded, so moved,

Meeting closed at 6:26.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Desmarais

